

**Amendments to the drawings,**

*There are no amendments to the Drawings.*

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### Remarks

#### Status of application

Claims 1-49 were examined and stand rejected in view of prior art. By this Supplemental Amendment, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 26, and 36 in an effort to more clearly distinguish the present invention from the prior art. Applicant has also canceled claims 9 and 42 and has amended claims 10, 16, and 43 to improve readability. In view of the below remarks and amendments herein, re-examination and reconsideration of the claims are respectfully requested.

#### Prior art rejections

The Applicant appreciates the Examiner's courtesy of a telephone interview on June 29, 2006. Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of claim 9 and has amended claim 36 to incorporate the limitations of claim 42, thereby more clearly distinguishing Applicant's claimed invention from the referenced prior art. Applicant has also amended independent claim 26 to include limitations similar to those of amended claim 1.

Applicant's invention provides for improved optimization of a database query by creating "subplans" inside each query block based on grouping quantifiers used in outer joins and optimizing these subplans independently. Applicant's methodology for optimization of subplans inside each query includes examination of alternative join methods (i.e., physical join operators) and access methods (e.g., indexes) and not merely the join strategy or join order for joining relations. In addition, Applicant's optimization methodology includes generating at least one access plan for each different set of column references used in the subplan whose tables are outside the subplan.

All told, the prior art references cited by the Examiner, even when combined, provide no teaching of generating subplans inside each query block of a database query in the manner described in Applicant's claims. Therefore, as the prior art references do not teach or suggest all of the claim limitations of Applicant's claims 1-8, 10-41, and 43-49 it is respectfully submitted that the claims distinguish over these references and overcome any rejection under Section 102 and Section 103.

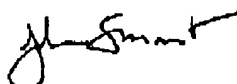
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks and the amendment to the claims, it is believed that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Hence, it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue at an early date.

If for any reason the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would in any way expedite prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 408 884 1507.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: July 10, 2006

✓  Digitally signed by John A. Smart  
Date: 2006.07.10 12:20:27 -07'00'

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